



डा. बी. वेणुगोपाल  
निदेशक

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national museum of natural history  
पर्यावरण एवं वन मंत्रालय Ministry of Environment & Forests

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To,


Sir,

1. The **National Museum of Natural History**, a sub-ordinate office of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, **Government of India**, plans to organise a week long “**Festival of Museums and Intangible Natural Heritage**” in Kalady during **22-27 June 2011**.
2. **The venue** is Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit (SSUS) in Kalady. The programme Partners include State Forest Department, State Tourism Department (Muziris Heritage Project), Kerala Kalamandalam and Moozhikulam Saala. The International Partner of the Festival is ICOM-NATHIST (International Council of Museum's Committee for Collections and Museums of Natural History).
3. The Festival is planned by the **NMNH** in the backdrop of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage which has selected Mudi yettu ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala as one of the latest UNESCO Inscriptions on the Representative List of the ICH of Humanity. Earlier Kutiyattam Sanskrit drama from Kerala was also inscribed.
4. It may be mentioned here that the organiser of the Festival, NMNH has been in the forefront of interpretation of Intangible Natural Heritage (Traditional Knowledge about Biodiversity) in India. The NMNH was given the responsibility by International Council of Museums (ICOM) to arrange the First capacity building workshop on “Documentation of Traditional Knowledge, Museums and INH (Intangible Natural Heritage)”. The NMNH has also organised two national level Programmes on Museums and Intangible Heritage in Kerala (Calicut in 2007 and Kochi in 2008). It has also established the only Museum gallery on *Hortus Malabaricus*, a document on the indigenous medicinal knowledge of Kerala and considered to be the earliest systematic and scientific documentation for traditional knowledge about biodiversity in Asia.
5. The Kalady Festival is the first in a series “Festivals on Museums and INH” planned by the NMNH. The other two Festivals this year will be arranged in Jodhpur and Bhubaneswar with focus on the UNESCO Inscriptions on the Representative List of the ICH of Humanity 2010 such as Kalbelia folk songs and dances (Rajasthan) and Chhau dance (Seraikella, Purulia and Mayurbhanj) respectively.
6. The Festival is **aimed** as a Capacity building programme for Museum personnel and Museology Students aimed to promote Museums as the hubs for documentation of Traditional Knowledge (TK), Intangible Heritage (IH) and Natural Heritage (NH) systems that are culturally perceived.
7. **Participants:** About 60 delegates from all over India will deliberate on the various subjects/ themes of the Festival. Delegates from outside Kerala include those from New Delhi, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat.

8. **Experts:** Various experts from Kerala and outside will lead the deliberations.
9. **Festival programmes** include sessions on Spice Heritage, Muziris Heritage, Nature elements in Cultural heritage, Sacred groves and Njattuvella. There will be a special session on Mudi yettu. The deliberations of the various sessions will be discussed on the last day to develop an Exhibition on Intangible Natural Heritage which will be developed later by the NMNH. There will be field visits to the oldest Nutmeg plantation in India (at Mekkalady) on the first Day ( 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011), Muziris Heritage Project Sites (23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011), Kerala Kalamandalam (24 June), Iringole Kaavu (25 June) and Moozhikulam Saala (26 June). Lecture cum demonstrations on Chavittu Natakam (22<sup>nd</sup> June in Kalady), Kathakali (24 June in Kerala Kalamandalam), and Pulluvan Paattu (25 June in Iringole). There will e a special session and Lecture cum demonstration on Mudi yettu (26 June in Moozhikulam Sala).
10. **The Key note speaker** will be Dr. K. G. Paulose, former Vice Chancellor of Kerala Kalamandalam.
11. **The inauguration** will be held in SSUS Kalady at 11 am on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011 (Wednesday). The Chief Guest will be Varanattu Sankara Narayana Kurup, an Exponent of Mudi yettu. Shri Jose Thettayil (the Honourable MLA), Professor M. K. Prasad (CMD, Information Kerala Mission) and Shri T. M. Manoharan (PCCF, Dept of Forests) will be Guests of Honour. Dr. J. Prasad, Vice Chancellor of SSUS Kalady will Preside over the function. Dr. B. Venugopal, Director of NMNH New Delhi and Executive Board Member of ICOM-NATHIST (International Council of Museum's Committee on Collections and Museums of Natural History) will also be present.

For local communication, you are requested to contact Professor S. Sivadasan, Head, Department of History, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady (Mobile 9846499980). Other contact persons are Shri Premkumar of Moozhikulam Sala (9447021246) and Shri John Thomas (9037698086).

Thanking you,  
Yours faithfully,

  
(Dr. B. Venugopal)  
Director



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